

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of bidding to drive competition in an auction comprising:
receiving a plurality of bids from a plurality of bidders;
using a parameter to distinguish the bidders into at least a first subset and a second subset
~~distinguishing the bidders according to a subset of a parameter;~~
assigning a first ~~at least one~~ identifier to the bidders in the first ~~[[each]]~~ subset;
assigning a second identifier to the bidders in the second subset; and, the subset
~~associated with the identifier being unknown to one or more of the bidders outside of the subset~~
~~but known to each of the bidders within the subset; and~~
displaying a lowest bid with the identifier for each bidder;
wherein the first identifier is unknown to bidders in the second subset and wherein the
second identifier is unknown to bidders in the first subset.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising: updating the lowest bids with new lowest bids from the bidders.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising: setting, in each subset, bid terms.
6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the setting comprises: establishing at least one of a reserve price, a historic price, a target price, time dependent variables, and bid strategies.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the establishing comprises: providing time dependent variables including at least one of an opening time, a closing time, time extensions,

and disclosures based on time.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising: providing a parameter, the parameter being at least one of regions, payment terms, delivery terms, contract length, contract volume, material, and qualification status.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the parameter comprises regions, the competition comprises global and regional competition, and ~~[[the]]~~ assigning a first identifier comprises: allotting a range of numbers to each region; and giving a number to each bidder in the region.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the displaying comprises: illustrating the lowest bids to allow a comparison regionally and globally.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving comprises: accepting bids for a plurality of lots.

12. (Currently amended) A method of bidding to drive competition in an auction comprising:
soliciting a plurality of bids;
receiving the bids from a plurality of bidders;
using a parameter to distinguish the bidders into at least a first subset and a second subset
~~distinguishing the bidders according to a subset of a parameter;~~
assigning a first ~~at least one~~ identifier to the bidders in the first ~~[[each]]~~ subset;
assigning a second identifier to the bidders in the second subset; ~~the subset associated~~
~~with the identifier being unknown to one or more of the bidders outside of the subset but known~~
~~to each of the bidders within the subset;~~
setting, in each subset, bid terms;
displaying a lowest bid with the identifier for each bidder;
allowing competition of the bidders within the subset and the parameter; and
updating the display with new lowest bids from the bidders;
wherein the first identifier is unknown to bidders in the second subset and wherein the
second identifier is unknown to bidders in the first subset.

13. (Currently amended) A system of bidding to drive competition in an auction comprising:
a database for receiving and storing bid information from bidders; and
a processor configured to: software for
use a parameter to distinguish[[ing]] the bidders into at least a first subset and a
second subset; according to a subset of a parameter,
assign[[ing]] at least one a first identifier to the bidders in the first [[each]] subset;
assign a second identifier to the bidders in the second subset; ,the subset
associated with the identifier being unknown to one or more of the bidders outside of the
subset but known to each of the bidders within the subset; and
display[[ing]] a lowest bid with the identifier for each bidder;
wherein the first identifier is unknown to bidders in the second subset and wherein the
second identifier is unknown to bidders in the first subset.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the parameter comprises at least one of regions, payment terms, delivery terms, contract length, contract volume, material, and qualification status.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14 wherein the first and second subsets comprise geographical areas for the regions, methods of payment for the payment terms, methods of delivery for the delivery terms, times for the contract length, capacities for the contract volume, types of material for the material, and at least one of approval and certification for the qualification status.

16. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the first identifier comprises a number selected from a range of numbers assigned to the subset.

17. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the database stores bid terms for each subset.

18. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the bid terms comprise at least one of a reserve price, a historic price, a target price, time dependent variables, and bid strategies.

19. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the ~~software updates processor is~~ further configured to update the lowest bids with new lowest bids.

20. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the first identifier indicates a number of bidders in each subset.

21. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the first identifier ~~varies by subset and~~ conceals a number of bidders in the first ~~[[each]]~~ subset.

22. (Currently amended) A computer program product for bidding to drive competition in an auction, the computer program product being embodied in a tangible computer readable medium and comprising computer instructions for:

receiving a plurality of bids from a plurality of bidders;

using a parameter to distinguish the bidders into at least a first subset and a second subset; ~~distinguishing the bidders according to a subset of a parameter and assigns at least one identifier to the bidders in each subset, the subset associated with the identifier being unknown to one or more of the bidders outside of the subset but known to each of the bidders within the subset;~~ and

displaying a lowest bid with the identifier for each bidder

wherein the first identifier is unknown to bidders in the second subset and wherein the second identifier is unknown to bidders in the first subset.

23. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the parameter comprises at least one of regions, payment terms, delivery terms, contract length, contract volume, material, and qualification status.

24. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the first and second subsets comprise geographical areas for the regions, methods of payment for the payment terms, methods of delivery for the delivery terms, times for the contract length, capacities for the contract volume, types of material for the material, and at least one of approval and certification for the qualification status.

25. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the first identifier comprises a number selected from a range of numbers assigned to the first subset.
26. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 22, further comprising setting, in each subset, bid terms.
27. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 26 wherein the bid terms comprise at least one of a reserve price, a historic price, a target price, time dependent variables, and bid strategies.
28. (Previously presented) A computer program product of claim 22, further comprising updating the lowest bids with new lowest bids.
29. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the first and second identifiers indicate a number of bidders in each respective subset.
30. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the first identifier ~~varies by subset and~~ conceals a number of bidders in the first ~~[[each]]~~ subset.